

The Two Babylons Chapter IV. Section IV – Extreme Unction



This is the next chapter after [Section III – The Sacrifice of the Mass](#)

The last office which Popery performs for living men is to give them “extreme unction,” to anoint them in the name of the Lord, after they have been shriven and absolved, and thus to prepare them for their last and unseen journey. The pretence for this “unction” of dying men is professedly taken from a command of James in regard to the visitation of the sick; but when the passage in question is fairly quoted it will be seen that such a practice could never have arisen from the apostolic direction—that it must have come from an entirely different source.

“Is any sick among you?” says James (v 14,15), “let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall RAISE HIM UP.”

Now, it is evident that this prayer and anointing were intended for the *recovery* of the sick. Apostolic men, for the laying of the foundations of the Christian Church, were, by their great King and Head, invested with miraculous powers—powers which were intended only for a time, and were destined, as the apostles themselves declared, while exercising them, to **“vanish away”** (1 Cor 13:8). These powers were every day exercised by the **“elders of the Church,”** when James wrote his epistle, and that for *healing* the bodies of men, even as our Lord Himself did. The “extreme unction” of Rome, as the very expression itself declares, is *not* intended for any such purpose. It is not intended for healing the sick, or *“raising them up”*; for it is *not* on any account to be administered till *all hope of recovery* is gone, and death is visibly at the very doors. As the object of this anointing is the very opposite of the Scriptural anointing, it must have come from a quite different quarter. That quarter is the very same from which the Papacy has imported so much heathenism, as we have seen already, into its own foul bosom. From the Chaldean Mysteries, extreme unction has obviously come. Among the many names of the Babylonian god was the name “Beel-samen,” “Lord of Heaven,” which is the name of the sun, but also of course of the sun-god. But Beel-samen also properly signifies “Lord of Oil,” and was evidently intended as a synonym of the Divine name, “The Messiah.” In Herodotus we find a statement made which this name alone can fully explain. There an individual

is represented as having dreamt that the sun had anointed her father. That the sun should anoint any one is certainly not an idea that could naturally have presented itself; but when the name "Beel-samen," "Lord of Heaven," is seen also to signify "Lord of Oil," it is easy to see how that idea would be suggested. This also accounts for the fact that the body of the Babylonian Belus was represented as having been preserved in his sepulchre in Babylon till the time of Xerxes, floating in oil (CLERICUS, *Philosoph. Orient.*). And for the same reason, no doubt, it was that at Rome the "statue of Saturn" was "made hollow, and filled with oil" (SMITH'S *Classical Dictionary*).

The olive branch, which we have already seen to have been one of the symbols of the Chaldean god, had evidently the same hieroglyphical meaning; for, as the olive was the oil-tree, so an olive branch emblematically signified a "son of oil," or an "anointed one" (Zech 4:12-14). Hence the reason that the Greeks, in coming before their gods in the attitude of suppliants deprecating their wrath and entreating their favour, came to the temple on many occasions bearing an olive branch in their hands. As the olive branch was one of the recognised symbols of their Messiah, whose great mission it was to make peace between God and man, so, in bearing this branch of the anointed one, they thereby testified that in the *name* of that anointed one they came seeking peace. Now, the worshippers of this Beel-samen, "Lord of Heaven," and "Lord of Oil," were anointed in the name of their god. It was not enough that they were anointed with "spittle"; they were also anointed with "magical ointments" of the most powerful kind; and these ointments were the means of introducing into their bodily systems such drugs as tended to excite their imaginations and add to the power of the magical drinks they received, that they might be prepared for the visions and revelations that were to be made to them in the Mysteries.

These "*unctions*," says Salverte, "were exceedingly frequent in the ancient ceremonies...Before consulting the oracle of Trophonius, they were rubbed with oil over the whole body. This preparation certainly concurred to produce the desired vision. Before being admitted to the Mysteries of the Indian sages, Apollonius and his companion were rubbed with an oil so powerful that *they felt as if bathed with fire*." This was professedly an unction in the name of the "Lord of Heaven," to fit and prepare them for being admitted *in vision* into his awful presence. The very same reason that suggested such an unction before initiation on this present scene of things, would naturally plead more powerfully still for a special "*unction*" when the individual was called, not in vision, but in reality, to face the "Mystery of mysteries," his personal introduction into the world unseen and eternal. Thus the Pagan system naturally developed itself into "extreme unction" (*Quarterly Journal of Prophecy*, January, 1853). Its votaries were *anointed* for their last journey, that by the double influence of superstition and powerful stimulants introduced into the frame by the only way in which it might then be possible, their minds might be fortified at once against the sense of guilt and the assaults of the king of terrors. From this source, and this alone, there can be no doubt came the "extreme unction" of the Papacy, which was entirely unknown among Christians till corruption was far advanced in the Church. *

* Bishop GIBSON says that it was not known in the Church for a

thousand years. (*Preservative against Popery*)

Continued in [Section V – Purgatory and Prayers for the Dead](#)

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